

A
S E R M O N

PREACHED AT
THE CHAPEL IN STOURBRIDGE,

On Friday April 19th 1793,

THE DAY APPOINTED FOR
A GENERAL FAST.

BY THE

REV. J. PATTINSON, A. M.

LATE OF QUEEN'S COLLEGE OXON, HEAD MASTER OF STOUR-
BRIDGE SCHOOL, AND MINISTER OF THE CHAPEL IN
STOURBRIDGE.

—FELICES NIMIUM SUA SI BONA NORINT
ANGLIGENE ! —

STOURBRIDGE: PRINTED BY J. WEST,
For F. and C. RIVINGTON, LONDON.

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PREACHED AT

THE CHAPEL IN STOURBRIDGE

ON THE 14th DAY

THE DAY PREPARED FOR



A GENERAL

OF THE

M. J. P. T. J. O. W. A. M.

OF THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY, STOURBRIDGE

RECTOR, AND MINISTER OF THE CHURCH IN

STOURBRIDGE.

— THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY, STOURBRIDGE —

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For H. and C. KINGTON, LONDON.

THE following Discourse, called for by the occasion, and written without any idea of publication, I am requested to print, by some respectable inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood of Stourbridge, who have honoured it with expressions of their approbation, and whose requisition I am unwilling to resist. As such, though I wrote it in haste, et quasi stans pede in uno, I submit it to their perusal, and that of the public. I profess myself a sincere advocate for the principles and sentiments it is intended to support: and I hope that this compliance with the application of my friends may not be deemed unseasonable or impertinent.

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A S E R M O N

Ec. Ec.

I. St. Peter, C. ii. V. xvii.

---LOVE THE BROTHERHOOD: FEAR GOD: HONOUR THE KING.

IN these three short, but comprehensive precepts, the whole duty of man as a benevolent, a dependant, and a social being, is summarily comprised.---The *Love of the Brotherhood* is that principle by which we are actuated in our wishes for their welfare, by which we are incited to use all due means to promote it, and to sympathize with them in all their sorrows and calamities: The *Fear of God* is that by which we are influenced in all our actions, as well in such as relate more immediately to His honour and worship, as in those, whatever they are, of which we suppose Him to be an observer, and by which we shall be judged: And to *Honour the King* is to pay such a regard to his authority, and

and such submission to his laws, as may tend to maintain the honour of his government, give effect to his counsels, and preserve the peace and harmony of society. When these injunctions are disobeyed, the effects ascribed to the observance of them are reversed. Neither the welfare of others as individuals, nor the general happiness of mankind is, in this case, regarded. A selfish principle of gratification, unawed by *divine fear*, and unrestrained by a sense of virtue and benevolence, takes full possession of the human heart; nor, provided it's measures can be effected either by open violence or secret fraud, is the iniquity of the means considered, or the misery and distress which are thereby brought upon others ever suffered to arrest the feelings, or prevent the crimes of the impious and unrelenting sinner.

To principles thus formed upon the ruins of *brotherly love*, of *piety*, and *obedience to the chief Magistrate*, and their operation and effects in a neighbouring nation, the present scene of devastation and horror, we may, I think, very justly ascribe the appointment of the solemnity which we are now called upon to observe,---to principles subversive of the dearest rights of mankind, tho' pretended to have the establishment and maintenance of these for their primary object, to principles which have deprived num-
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berless individuals of their property and lives, under the assurance of introducing a species of *Equality* totally incompatible with the necessary regulations of society, yet calculated to seduce and delude the multitude, to divert the attention of the lower orders of the community from the necessary and unavoidable occupations of life, and to elevate their aims, from a state of labour and dependance, to a condition more worthy of men equally endowed by nature, and therefore equally entitled with their more fortunate fellow creatures.

That all men should be happy, and that none should suffer the hardships of want, or the toils of indigence, the *love of the brotherhood*, the first particular prescribed by St. Peter in the text, will naturally excite every benevolent person to wish, and if possible, to effect. But in the present imperfect state of our being is it possible that a system productive of this consequence can be devised?-----Provided however all men were equally endowed, which is by no means the case, and provided they were equally furnished with the conveniencies and accommodations of life, the earth yields not it's produce without cultivation, nor does the sea supply it's treasures but to the diligence and exertion of the active and industrious. What therefore would be the
consequence

consequence of such an *Equality*, were we, for a moment, to suppose it inviolably maintained?---Certainly no other than famine and death!

The natural desires and pursuits of men would however of themselves prevent this general calamity. The indolent and the profligate, having consumed or squandered their possessions, would presently reduce themselves to the necessity of labouring for their own subsistence, and the support of others; and we have reason to magnify and extol the Providence of God, not that He has ordained an equal lot and portion either of talents or worldly advantages, but because He has so constituted the world, that a diversity of attainments and stations is the necessary consequence of the nature and frame of the present scene of our being.

But as an unbounded *love of the brotherhood*, as extensive as the world's limits, has been pretended to influence the measures of a certain people, it may be proper briefly to consider the precept of the Apostle as to the occasion on which it was given, and the circumstances of those to whom it was addressed; from whence it may appear how far the propagation of dissension and anarchy, under whatever colour or disguise, is calculated to promote the end, and fulfil
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the purpose intended by St. Peter in these few words—*Love the Brotherhood.*

The Epistle in which this direction is contained, was written to * *the strangers*, or Christian converts, *scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.*—These recent followers of Christ are exhorted to *love the brotherhood*, or, according to the more emphatic commandment of our Saviour to the same purpose, and the distinguishing characteristic of His Gospel, *to love one another*,—to omit no opportunity of doing kind offices to each other, for their better countenance and support against the invectives and assaults of their enemies, who would naturally be ready to take advantage of their differences and divisions, and to give a proof of the purity of the Religion which they professed, by the influence which it had upon their lives and behaviour. —For the discharge of this, or any other duty enjoined by our holy Religion, fact and experience forbid us to look in the principle and conduct of *French fraternization!*

But other circumstances more interesting, and more apposite to our present purpose, demand our more particular attention.

That

* St. James, C. 1. V. 1. *to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad.* See also Acts, C. 26. V. 7.

That the Christians to whom St. Peter wrote might found their principles and practice upon better grounds than any which merely human considerations could afford, he adds---
Fear God.

This principle includes in it all that is virtuous and all that is praise-worthy in human conduct. It is the basis and consummation of all that is good, and all that is holy. It leaves no room for the commission of any known sin, as it influences every act of man, whether public or retired, whether important or minute. It is emphatically stiled in Scripture *the beginning of Wisdom*, as being the source and origin from which all that is *wise* can issue and proceed.--- It is that with which a sense of guilt cannot consist without unutterable dread;---it is, next to the belief of God's existence, the ground-work of Religion; and as it excludes or diminishes all other *fear*, it is the support of those who are ready to perish by the malicious designs and wicked devices of such men as have not *this fear before their eyes*.

The people, or rather the usurpers of the Sovereignty of *France*, against whose measures we are assembled to supplicate the blessing of the Almighty upon our Fleets and Armies, divested themselves of *this fear* before they dared to commit
enormities

enormities before unknown to mankind. They endeavoured at least, by a vain and arrogant philosophy, to reason themselves out of the uneasy apprehension of God's judgment, which the *fear of Him* could not but excite in their minds :--nay, some of them even profess to have discovered that the Almighty Governor of the Universe has merely a nominal existence, by which the slaves of prejudice, and the bigots of enthusiasm have attempted to impose upon the reason of mankind, and to awe them into they know not what servile dread of punishments in futurity never to be inflicted.

While we commiserate, let it be our most anxious care to withstand and repel the incroachments of such a spirit of atheism, or infidelity, which undermines the foundation of all that is pious, virtuous, and benevolent. Rather than listen to the impious assertions of such men, the result of their vices, which the evidence of Scripture uniformly condemns, and which therefore they are eager to reject and discard, let us remember that our holy Religion, and all its saving truths, are built upon the foundation of prophecies fulfilled, of miracles performed, and on the testimony of witnesses, whose credibility we have no reason to question, nor to suspect that they were imposed upon by fictitious appearances

pearances, who saw and heard our Saviour, and have *testified*
of the truth as it is in Jesus. Let us seriously reflect that these
 are such grounds of belief as require more credulity to suppose
 that they are false, than to conclude that they are true: and let
 us call to mind, that the minute philosophers of the present
 age, of whatever country, who would persuade us, by the light
 of reason, that we are deceived in our notions with regard
 to the authenticity of the Scriptures, and the truth of the
 Christian Religion, are men, whose ignorance of the true
 grounds of Christianity, and their affectation of singular
 penetration and discernment have incited them to reject and
 deny what they never fairly examined. Moreover we have
 reason to be thankful to the Providence of God, that He
 has vouchsafed to us defenders of our Faith infinitely more
 powerful than any of it's adversaries; and that the truths of
 Christianity are more ably displayed by it's friends, than
 they have ever been assailed by it's enemies. One of these,
 of profound learning and approved abilities, who has lately
 appeared in it's support, a layman, and therefore not charge-
 able with professional prejudice, characterizes the Gospel,
 and ascribes infidelity or deism to it's proper cause, in the
 following words:—"The spirit of truth breathes in every
 "line of this sacred history; and every line affords matter
 "of edification to the sincere and intelligent inquirer. The
 "reason

" reason why there are so many deists in the world, arises
 " either from their total ignorance of these writings, or an
 " imperfect knowledge, which is more fatal than ignorance.
 " For the person not at all acquainted can say nothing, but
 " the half-read and superficial abounds with cavil and mis-
 " representation. But whoever is a friend to virtue and
 " truth, and zealous for divine knowledge, will find ample
 " store in this sacred repository. Nobody, with sincerity of
 " heart, can read the scriptures, but, by the blessing of God,
 " he must be a believer."*

The next and last precept of the apostle is perhaps even
 more obnoxious to the humour of certain persons than the
 foregoing: some at least, we know, profess to *fear God*, who
 refuse to *honour the King*.

That such should exist in our own country, under the aus-
 pices of a prince equally distinguished by the virtues of his
 public and private character, equally the king and father of
 his people, while it excites our wonder, cannot but raise our
 indignation. If any circumstance or consideration can in-
 crease this wonder, and aggravate this indignation, it is, that
 the prosperity of such men, and in general their affluence,
 which they owe in a great measure to the influence of the go-
 vernment

* See Bryant's authenticity of the scriptures, and the truth of the Christian
 Religion. Page 130.

vernment of *England*, and it's constant attention to the commercial interests of this happy nation, that circumstance which should have lead them to congratulate themselves upon the benefits which they enjoy as *Englishmen*, has rendered them vain, arrogant, and uneasy ; that they have perverted the very cause of joy and thankfulness into grounds of discontent, and that they have manifested a desire of exciting sedition and tumult,--because, they say, the Constitution is not *perfect*. I grant that it is not : but till the disaffected can discover to us any human institution that is so, we will not be ashamed of the cause which we take upon us to support. Absolute perfection is no more the work than the condition of our nature. But from the mournful example of a neighbouring country, let us be aware of adopting delusive and fatal methods of reform, nor rashly destroy the fabric which we need but to repair. Under the direction of wise and temperate measures, whatever the most refractory can urge, and the most discontented wish for, may occasionally be added or removed, to increase, if possible, it's strength, and improve it's beauty. But head-strong principles of demolition, intemperate and intolerant proceedings, can tend only to weaken, and finally destroy that foundation of general peace and security, which foreign countries have contemplated

contemplated with admiration and envy, and which therefore no real and judicious friend of order, and all the blessings consequent upon it, can never attempt or wish to undermine.

That such attempts however may not be made, and the more effectually to recommend that *honour* which the text enjoins as due to the *king*, let us turn our eyes to the calamities which at this time distract, and threaten to destroy a miserable people, calamities which have arisen from a conduct and principles diametrically opposite to those which are prescribed by St. Peter, both in respect of the *fear* which we owe to *God*, and the *honour* which we are required to pay to the *king*. I would not in the mean time be understood to justify or support the arbitrary measures, which either were, or might have been practised in their unhappy country previously to the first attempts they made to rescue themselves from the several hardships to which the national government subjected them. There were doubtless many evils, the suppression or removal of which the interests of humanity, and a regard to the common rights of mankind required: for where the will of the powerful is the law by which their actions are regulated, innocence has no security against the violence of its incroachments. All men therefore

fore who enjoyed the blessings of liberty, and particularly *Englishmen*, who were acquainted with it's value, rejoiced, we may presume, with a generous sympathy, at their first efforts in the cause of freedom. But our joy was of short duration, and the congratulations which we thought were due to their first successes, we presently perceived to be premature. A spirit of general licentiousness, unheard of in former times, almost instantaneously converted the advantages which seemed to have been gained, into occasions of sorrow and commiseration, rather than of triumph. The usurpers of power intoxicated, it seemed, with the novelty of their assumed functions, and grown giddy with the elevation to which they were raised, having cast the *fear of God* behind them, set no bounds to the extravagance of their proceedings. Every suspected friend of former measures, was beheld with an eye of jealousy, harrassed with persecution, and menaced with death, till at length they were forced either to run for refuge to foreign countries more hospitable than their own; or they found a dark and dreary receptacle in the loathsome prisons of their distracted metropolis.

The scenes which followed the sympathy of future times will never cease to commiserate, nor to contemplate with equal astonishment and abhorrence the massacres which
were

were perpetrated, the cruelties which were exercised upon the living, and the insults which were offered to the dead, outrages in which the privilege of sex, the claims of age, and the cries of infancy were alike contemned and violated, outrages which will for ever stain the annals of a nation, it should seem, unjustly celebrated for civility and refinement: ---at least the barbarous cruelties of untaught savages have never yet exhibited spectacles more enormous, more circumstanced with guilt, and more replete with horror, than those which licentious villainy has presented, and in which it has triumphed, as examples of deserved vengeance, and prevailing justice.

But a sacrifice still greater was reserved for the unprovoked malice of a blood-thirsty faction, consisting principally of persons elevated from low stations, instigated by vulgar and vindictive passions, uncontrolled by the salutary admonitions of religion, of their contempt and reprobation of which they loudly boasted, and unrestrained by the dictates of common humanity, which they professed to despise as an impolitic and unseasonable weakness.

A monarch, whose misfortune and whose crime it was, that he was descended from a long line of ancestors who had

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swayed

swayed the sceptre of *France*, and that he was a *king*,---a monarch, the virtues of whose private character are universally acknowledged, except by those who, disaffected to all ruling powers, are therefore unwilling to allow any praise to such as seem to be obnoxious to their own views of ambition and aggrandizement,---a monarch, whose constant study it was to soften the rigour of those laws of which *Frenchmen* had just reason to complain, as transmitted thro' the medium of ruder ages, is treated with every species of ignominy and insult; till at last we hear, with consternation and amazement, that the furious leaders of anarchy and faction have filled up the measure of their crimes " by the consummation of the most barbarous, unjust, unnecessary and impolitic murder that disgraces the annals of human history, the manners of any nation, the morals of any age." * Neither the tears of afflicted relatives, nor the supplications of commiserating friends, if any durst commiserate in this unhappy land of pretended freedom, were regarded. He is murdered as a *tyrant*, who had he been a *tyrant*, would, thro' the vigorous exertion of measures, the exercise of which was committed to him by the prerogative of his title, have left no room, nor afforded an opportunity to the most sanguinary

* See a letter to Mr. Fox, page 56.

sanguinary and unprincipled of ruffians, to exemplify at the same time, and record their cruelty and injustice in letters written with his blood.

But however our humanity may be interested by the occurrences which have alarmed, and the atrocities which have excited the indignation of *Europe*, that circumstance which most nearly affects us, and awakens our resentment as members of a happy community, is that during these barbarous excesses the *French Republic* received the addresses, and spoke peace to itself from the applauses of disaffected and mutinous *Englishmen*, who seemed ready to co-operate with it in the production of similar excesses in their own country, against the constitution and government of which, it appeared, that they meditated an open attack, and began to exult in the prospect of a surrender or compromise; that it offered it's assistance, and the operation of it's arms towards the subversion of all national governments in which a desire of change and revolution should manifest itself, and that it was actually employed, by means of it's emissaries and adherents in this country, in fomenting discontent and disaffection wherever it found them, and in attempting to propagate them where they did not exist. While we reprobate and abhor, we have happily perhaps no reason, as *Englishmen*, to
lament

lament the efforts which have been thus made to disturb the national tranquillity. The effect has manifested itself in such a spirit of loyalty and attachment to our SOVEREIGN, of love and reverence of the British constitution, and in such general protestations against the measures and consequent mischiefs which seemed to threaten us, as give us better assurances, than we could otherwise have had, of permanent security.

But the aggressions of our enemies ended not here. Presuming that we were weak, or that we were treacherous, that we were unable, or should be unwilling to fulfil our political engagements, they proceeded to attack our allies; and pretending to emancipate mankind from all the ties by which they are united, and by which their tranquillity is ensured, dared to profess that they would overturn all ruling powers, and give laws which they despise, and liberty, the evils of which their own experience might have taught them, to the countries which should invite or receive the protection of their arms, and the wisdom and benevolence of their counsels.

Fortunately the present state of things encourages better expectations, and promises less success to their enterprises, than from the confidence of their declarations they seemed
to

to anticipate : and we may hope that certain disaffected persons in our own country, will, from their example and misery, learn to cherish and revere the constitution and government, under the auspices of which they have the happiness to live.

In the mean time, duly impressed with the importance of the cause in which we are engaged, the immediate object of which is *the defence and maintenance of the rights of our allies, and more remotely the security of our own property, Religion, and laws*, let us unite our zeal and endeavours in giving it our most active and vigorous support, in our respective stations, and according to our several abilities, with humble and devout reliance upon the *God of Armies*, who sees our actions and considers our designs, that He will grant us the protection of His mercy, and the assistance of His power.



to anticipate : and we may hope that certain ob-
jections in our own country will, from their example
and anxiety, lead to a similar and reverse the conclusion and
Government, under the auspices of which they have the
happy felicity to live.

In the mean time, duly impressed with the importance of
the cause in which we are engaged, the immediate object of
which is the defence and maintenance of the rights of our allies
and more especially the liberty of our sister Republic, France,
and lastly, let us unite our real and cordial efforts in giving
it our most active and vigorous support, in our respective
Sessions, and according to our several abilities, with humble
and devout reliance upon the God of Justice, who has our
actions and considers our desires, that He will exert His
protection of His most faithful and obedient subjects.

26 FEB 66



